

TWO NEW ORGANIZATIONS JOIN BOARD

AFAC's New Board Executive & Members

AFAC is pleased to announce two new industry organizations to its board.

- ✓ **Alberta Auction Markets Association** is now a permanent board member. Jackie Sawley will represent AAMA on AFAC's board. This group has been an ACTIVE member since AFAC's inception.
- ✓ **Alberta Equestrian Federation** is a new active member and Director-at-Large on the AFAC board (two year term). The AEF representative to AFAC will be announced in July.

AFAC's board members elected executive officers following the Annual Meeting, March 23.

- ✓ **David Hyink**, representing the chicken producers, was re-elected chairman. He is also director on the board of Alberta Chicken Producers, is chairman of it's Research Committee and is on the Intensive Livestock Working Group. Dave runs a broiler operation with his family in Ponoka.
- ✓ **Duane Landals**, representing Alberta Veterinary Medical Association was re-elected vice-chairman. He is Registrar for AVMA, has been a rural practitioner for over 25 years, is owner of a veterinary practice at Morinville, is past president of CVMA and is the Canadian delegate to the World Veterinary Association.
- ✓ **Ken Jackson**, representing pork producers, joins Dave and Duane on AFAC's executive. He is a director for Alberta Pork and Chair of its Animal Care and Health Committee. He and his family have a farrow-to-finish hog and grain farm.

the
livestock
industry
working
together for
responsible
livestock care.



Animal Protection Act

The revised Act was proclaimed Jan/06. Livestock industry meetings will be held this fall to discuss:

- ✓ use of monetary penalties / fines;
- ✓ referencing of Codes of Practice;
- ✓ use of Special Prosecutor.

afac.ab.ca

AFAC Board Members

Alberta Auction Markets Association
Alberta Egg Producers
Alberta Hatching Egg Producers
Alberta Sheep & Wool Commission
University of Alberta*
Alberta Agriculture, Food & Rural Development

Alberta Beef Producers
Alberta Elk
Alberta Milk
Alberta Turkey Producers
Western Stock Growers Association

Alberta Chicken Producers
Alberta Equestrian Federation*
Alberta Pork
Alberta Veterinary Medical Association
Wild Rose Agricultural Producers

AFAC Active Members

Alberta Association of Ag Societies
Bison Producers of Alberta
Edmonton Northlands
Lakeland College

Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association
Canada/Alberta Livestock Research Trust
Feeder Associations of Alberta Ltd.
North American Equine Ranching Information Council

Alberta Poultry Hatchery Association
Canadian Professional Rodeo Association
Horse Racing Alberta

*Active Member on Board

Livestock care progress linked to economic opportunities

The livestock industry across Canada has helped to strengthen its economic future by championing responsible animal care.

The progress could not come at a more important time, said **Dr. David Fraser**, Chair of UBC's Animal Welfare Department and an AFAC conference speaker. "The change in public attitude toward animal welfare has led to profound changes in social policy worldwide, and agriculture, as by far the world's largest user of animals, has been at the focus of a lot of these changes."

Major examples of recent global initiatives include the European Commission's new Animal Welfare Action Plan, the new World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the European Union's new Welfare Quality Project.

Even Asia is getting into the act, with China – by far the world's largest pork producer – showing an interest in higher standards to facilitate broader trade.

Managing the expectations of this new world at the production level is a

AFAC's 2006 Livestock Care Conference featured speakers on global developments, training approaches, humane transportation, research & public communications. Over 170 livestock industry participants attended.

major challenge, said **Dr. Jeff Rushen** and **Dr. Anne Marie de Passillé**, who also spoke at the conference.

These researchers believe flexible, animal-based standards that assess the state of the animals are needed rather than prescriptive conditions. In a paper for the OIE, they have also called for a smoother integration of animal welfare and food safety standards.

"On the production end, there's a danger in becoming fixated on the negative consequences of animal welfare – we think it's going to cost us more, that there will be legislation and regulations and all these difficult things.

Many improvements to animal welfare can be cost effective. I think there are actually going to be a lot of benefits, including economic benefits," said Rushen.

Another key benefit at the production level will be lessening the human emotional toll of dealing with difficult animal distress situations, said **Dr. Claude Mason**, a Manitoba veterinarian.

In a presentation on humane euthanasia, Mason emphasized training, procedures and empowerment are all essential to help people assess situations and do what's right for the animal.

Dr. Martin Appelt of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) provided an overview of progress on the CFIA's new process to examine changes to Health of Animals Livestock Transport Regulations.

"The current regulations are more than 30 years old and include few defining terms on specific guidelines for handling livestock.

Developing standards that are tailored to Canada's needs is a primary concern," said Appelt.

"Canada would certainly be considered an 'A student' with regard to meeting the expectations of the OIE guidelines, and we intend to stay that way," said Appelt. "But that doesn't mean we have to do something just because someone else is doing it. We want our guidelines first and foremost to reflect the best humane animal transport practices for Canada."

Overall strong communications by the provincial farm animal care groups and the new National Farm Animal Care Council (NFAACC) are critical to continued progress, said Crystal Mackay of OFAC.



Dr. Claude Mason speaking on humane euthanasia training.



Gordon Coukell, chairman of the National Farm Animal Care Council.

Livestock leaders recognized with Awards of Distinction

The Awards of Distinction presentation is an opportunity to recognize those in our industry who have worked hard to advance the well being of livestock in Alberta.

All recipients are ambassadors for the Alberta livestock industry and can be held up as examples of those who are making a difference.

The **Award of Distinction for Industry Leadership** was presented to **Jeff Ball** and his company, Ballco Feeders of Brant, AB. He was recognized for his early implementation of the Alberta Beef On-Farm Safety Program and its animal care spin-off benefits.



Jeff Ball

The **Award of Distinction for Communication** was awarded to **Dr. Roy Lewis**, a Westlock, AB, veterinarian. For 25 years, Lewis has taken an active role in 'getting the message out' about farm animal care in a factual and honest way, to build trust and credibility.

Lewis is a regular contributor to several industry publications. Most recently, Lewis has written about humane transportation and euthanasia of livestock.

The **Award of Distinction for Innovation** was presented to **Jennifer Woods** of Blackie, AB, for her role in creating the Livestock Emergency Response Course for Alberta.

Jennifer has delivered 31 Livestock Emergency Response Courses to over 550 people, representing 100 fire departments and other agencies.

Woods has worked with insurance companies as part of this effort. "The insurance adjustments and payments on cargo claims tend to be lower and are less complicated to handle when personnel Jennifer has trained respond to the accident scene," said Kevin Cornforth of Hartford Insurance.



Roy Lewis



David Hyink & Jennifer Woods

Animal Protection Act (APA) — Industry Input

- ✓ The revised APA was proclaimed January 3, 2006.
- ✓ The APA was first enacted in Alberta in 1967. It gives the Alberta government legislative authority for the protection of animals. It is the Act most frequently used to prosecute those who have neglected or abused animals. The Criminal Code has rarely been used in Alberta, and only when cases involve criminal intent to harm.
- ✓ The APA was revised to clarify definitions and other wording to improve animal protection and to respond to industry's request to amalgamate provincial regulations (or portions thereof) that related to animal care.
- ✓ The industry review process started June 2004. AFAC submitted its recommendations on Sept 15, 2004. From then and until June 2005, AFAC's board provided detailed input to several drafts of the Act and Regulations. Through AFAC and the diligence of its board, the livestock industry has provided considerable valued counsel to this process.

ALERT Line Update

The ALERT Line coordinator handled 76 calls from January 1 to April 30, 2006. AFAC's Livestock Care Advisor, Dr. Ray Fenton, visited 18 farms and feedlots in this time period. Case breakdown includes:

	Beef	13	Bison	3
	Other	1	Horses	7
TOTAL Cases				24
Information Calls				52

Due to the herd size and severity of a few cases and perceived cost to handle herds in distress, Dr. Fenton and the Alberta SPCA are drafting the *Herd Response protocol*. This will identify when and how AFAC and the Alberta SPCA and others in the industry can respond.

LIVESTOCK CARE

ALERT

Call if you have livestock care concerns

1-800-506-2273

afac.ab.ca

Supported by Alberta's Livestock Industry



Breakdown of Dr. Fenton's 2005 ALERT Activities

# of seizures he recommended	3
# of seizures he assisted	2
# of Alberta SPCA activated cases he handled	18
# of ALERT activated cases he handled	27

2004 ALERT LINE SUMMARY

	Beef	26	Bison	11
	Dairy	3	Deer / Elk	4
	Horse	17	Sheep	2
			Others	7
TOTAL Cases				70
Information Calls				169
TOTAL				239

2005 ALERT LINE SUMMARY

	Beef	50	Bison	7
	Dairy	2	Elk	2
	Feather	2	Horse	24
	Other	4	Pigs	1
TOTAL Cases				92
Information Calls				158
TOTAL				250

Alberta SPCA

The Alberta SPCA is contracted by the Alberta government to enforce the Animal Protection Act. Every call is investigated by the eight constables in offices in Edmonton, Red Deer, Strathmore and Grande Prairie.

A new centralized dispatch system is in place, using **1-800-455-9003** and providing 24/7 service.

Of the 1,889 investigations conducted in 2005 (compared to 1,747 in 2004);

- 59% were unfounded,
- 20% were distress situations,
- 15% were educational,
- 0.8% were deemed alleged abuse,
- 5% were other.

Of the 1,889 investigations;

- 42% involved dogs,
- 23% horses,
- 13.6% beef cattle,
- 8% other,
- 7.8% cats,
- 1.8% bison,
- 1.4% sheep.

Less than half the investigations involved commercial livestock.

In 2005, 16 charges were laid (compared to 21 in 2004). Of the nine livestock related cases, convictions were: two \$1,000 fines, one 5 year supervision order and two sentences pending for horse neglect cases, one 10 year prohibition for bison that is

being appealed, two prohibitions restricting owners to 10 beef cattle and one with charges on hold pending more evidence.

The constables conducted 123 inspections of auction markets, stables, rodeos, pet shops and kennels in 2005.

Aart Okkema, past chairman of AFAC, was elected to the Alberta SPCA board. His input, as a livestock farmer, will be valued, given the scope of Alberta SPCA's mandate in rural Alberta.

Of note, the Alberta SPCA also handle the pet related calls in the city of Red Deer.

AFAC Board Meeting Highlights

November 25

- ✓ **Veterinary Professions Act** - expanded definition of a veterinarian reviewed with emphasis that exemptions remain the same.
- ✓ **National Farm Animal Council (NFACC)** - proposed vision includes promoting responsible animal care. The main focus will be farmed animals.
- ✓ **Case review** - Barb Shackel-Hardman explained the government is reviewing of a recent case involving a pig farm charged by Alberta SPCA with the goal of identifying ways to improve.
- ✓ **Auction markets tour** - Dr. Fenton toured 8 auction markets, he was impressed by the lack of unfit livestock. CFIA inspectors are using the humane handling guidelines developed by the Alberta industry.
- ✓ **Alberta SPCA** - reported on cattle on contract leases being returned in poor condition and an elk farm with animals pending seizure.

February 15

- ✓ **Codes of Practice recommendations** - NFACC outlined process to revamp the Codes of Practice & AFAC provided feedback.
- ✓ **Standing Policy Committee Meeting** - the Jan 30 presentation was well attended by MLAs who raised concern about handling of poor management cases.

- ✓ **Animal Protection Act** - proclaimed on Jan 3/06. Concern was expressed for cost recovery in dealing with abandoned animals & large herd seizures.
- ✓ **Animals in Transport Regulations** - CFIA proposed changes, current situation, potential impacts & suggestions were reviewed. Chart circulated to members.
- ✓ **Awards of Distinction** - nominations discussed & approved.

April 27

- ✓ **New Board Members** - Alberta Auction Markets Association as permanent board members, Alberta Equestrian Federation as a Director-at-Large.
- ✓ **ALPS Management Group** - AFAC, Alberta SPCA & AAFRD working on a extension plan that reflects the proposed AAFRD enforcement philosophy - voluntary compliance. A new monetary penalty approach is under construction. AFAC ALERT manual to include more detail for situations when we refer distress cases to Alberta SPCA.
- ✓ **Putting Farm Animal Welfare on the Agenda** - Farm Animal Council groups working on a coordinated approach to farm animal care extension & public messaging.
- ✓ **Research** - two animal welfare projects were approved by the consortium; poultry euthanasia & poultry transportation
- ✓ **Extension Policies** - board approved policy emphasizing grassroots instruction & delivery agent conditions.

Recent AFAC Participation

- ✓ Horse Breeders & Owner Conference
- ✓ Banff Pork Seminar
- ✓ Camrose Bull Congress & Mannville area 4-H (thanks to Richard Nydokus)
- ✓ AVMA AGM
- ✓ Alberta Beef Industry Conference
- ✓ Rock the Farm
- ✓ Agricultural Service Board Conference
- ✓ Canadian Beef School, Olds College
- ✓ Pre Veterinary Medicine Club, U of A
- ✓ Broiler Welfare Research Symposium
- ✓ Alberta Egg Producers AGM
- ✓ Canadian Pork School
- ✓ Aggie Days

Aggie Days

One of the best ways for AFAC to connect with urban students and teachers is through the Calgary Stampede's Aggie Days. Over 20,000 students, teachers and parents attend this annual 5 day event: three days for school children, two days for the public.

AFAC distributed educational DVDs, brochures, rulers as well as over 500 student workbooks.

The AFAC Trivia Wheel is always in demand. Students are asked general questions about farm animal and how farmers care for their animals.

The *Farmers Care for their Animals* message is reinforced at all AFAC member displays.



Animal Care Assessment Tool Workshops

Alberta pork producers learned about and provided input to the new Canadian Pork Council's voluntary animal welfare audit program. It is a stand-alone component of the Canadian Quality Assurance program, the hog industry's on-farm food safety program.

In a series of seven workshops, Sarah Turner, Alberta Quality Pork Manager reviewed:

- ✓ the Canadian approach to on-farm animal care verification;

- ✓ the object to promote sound animal care practices and provide a mechanism to show practices are followed;
- ✓ animal care control points:
 - human / animal
 - animal / environment
 - animal / animal.

Although producers are highly supportive of the initiative, they have raised valid concerns about required space per pig and the need to use animal outcomes versus prescriptive measures for assessing the welfare of

their animals. "We're going to take another look to see how everything is defined, making sure its clear and not going to put restrictions on producers," says Turner.

She adds, "One of the things with animal welfare and production in general, is a system is only as good as the people working within it. At the end of the day **good stock people make the biggest impact upon the animal well being**, and a knowledgeable stock person really makes a program and makes a barn run well."



Sarah Turner



Seven Workshops in Alberta



In Dec/05 Dr. Grandin toured the Plain Lakes Colony swine facilities with Ben Hofer and tested the new Animal Care Assessment Tool

Livestock Handling Extension

4-H Livestock Welfare Project

We completed Year 2 of this three year project in April. This project is co-funded by Alberta Livestock Industry Development Fund. We are able to offer these successful workshops for one more year through this funding.

Over 280 4-H members and adults attended the **ten** five-hour *Livestock Handling for Youth* workshops delivered by Jennifer Woods.

AFAC's counterparts, Farm Animal Council of Saskatchewan and Ontario Farm Animal Council, incorporated the Alberta 4-H L.A.W. (Learning About Animal Welfare) program into their provincial 4-H programs.

We are developing a L.A.W. for horse projects. And, we have asked the fall Beef Leaders Update to address how leaders can help 4-H members understand animal welfare issues, examine their own practices with their project animals and develop a strategy for responding to animal welfare concerns from the public.

Green Certificate Project

Alberta Centre for Injury Control and Research co-funded this project with AFAC to deliver five one-day *Livestock Handling for Injury Prevention* workshops to Green Certificate trainees in Alberta.

These workshops, presented by Jennifer Woods, provided participants with the skills and understanding of livestock behaviour to reduce injuries on agriculture operations.

Livestock Welfare Extension Workshop

July 19, Olds College

Human — Livestock Interactions

The Stockperson, Productivity & Welfare of Farmed Animals with Dr. Paul Hemsworth

Call AFAC for details (403.932.8050).

QLT Update

Development:

- The beef, hog, poultry, sheep and commercial horse modules are complete.
- Alberta's four major beef plants have been updated on the progress of the program that they have supported from the start.

Deliveries:

- The poultry course was presented at the Lilydale poultry plant in Wynyard, SK in March and to associates of the BC SPCA and BC poultry transporters.
- A poultry course is scheduled for an Alberta plant in July.



The first beef and hog courses will be held at Olds College September 16/17. Alberta Pork will assist in delivering the hog modules (with the TQA component).

Check www.livestocktransport.ca for registration details.

Livestock Emergency Response 1-866-684-3028

Hartford and Canadian Farm Insurance have worked with Jennifer Woods to set up a toll-free number to assist with responding to livestock liner roll-overs or other incidents.

The number has been given to 911 dispatchers and fire departments. The call goes directly to Jennifer who then acts as a reference to help get those with livestock accident expertise to assist at the accident.

Animal Transport Regulations

The AFAC board has determined that it is of value for AFAC to submit recommendations to CFIA regarding changes being considered to the Animal Transport Regulations, given the work done over the years on this topic. For example, AFAC and the Alberta livestock industry have:

- ✓ identified transportation issues in our *Humane Livestock Transportation* report in 1994 and again in the 2002 report;
- ✓ addressed the humane handling of downer and unfit livestock before CFIA had a policy and pressed the Alberta government to change its regulation regarding the shipping of downers;
- ✓ studied the frequency of downers arriving at auctions and meat plants;
- ✓ developed a training program for livestock haulers.

The AFAC recommendations:

- are general in nature and not species specific;
- focus on the need to reference Codes or other transport related reference guidelines or standards (The codes stay current and can change and show how the industry changes and grows based on new

information, new research, new trucks, new methods of transportation. There are so many variables involved, weather, type of animal, distance, driving conditions, type of vehicle. We feel it's very important to look at the codes of practice as they are very well done and enable the industry, working with CFIA, to include changes as our industry evolves.);

- encourage CFIA to work with industry to gain a better understanding of our current best management practices under Alberta and Canadian conditions.

The board is encouraging all AFAC member groups to submit their own response to CFIA and to encourage their national groups to address this subject and be cognizant of the impact of changes on our livestock hauling industry in Alberta.

Very little, if any, data is available on the movement of livestock across Canada and into the US and Mexico.

We need good regulations to deal with those who do not comply to acceptable humane standards. But, in the words of the draft Alberta beef industry document, we do not need regulations that impede commerce.

What's on your plate?

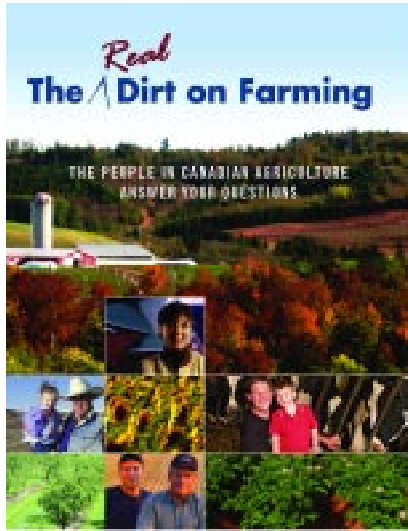
The Alberta Livestock Industry Development Fund earmarked \$3 million for livestock media relations and public awareness. This includes twelve 2-page spreads currently running in the Edmonton Journal and Calgary Herald.

Themes like animal welfare, food safety and the environment are being featured. AFAC is actively involved. Never before has AFAC been able to reach out to such a large urban audience. AFAC award winners have been featured.

Humane care a way of life



Example of one of the articles that ran in the April issue



The 'Real' Dirt on Farming

Anyone who is interested in where their food comes from and the facts on farming in Canada can find it in a new document *The 'Real' Dirt on Farming – The People in Canadian Agriculture Answer your Questions* resource booklet, published by the Ontario Farm Animal Council (OFAC).

Students, educators, politicians and the media who want to know more about the issues in agriculture, such as farm animal care or food safety will all find this 36 page full-colour booklet to be a helpful resource.

AFAC contributed in a small way to this project. Many other agricultural groups as well as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Agricultural Adaptation Council's CanAdvance Program have contributed to this worthy OFAC initiative.

Visit afac.ab.ca/publications/realdirt.htm to view or download a copy. Call AFAC for copies.

Putting Farm Animal Welfare on the Agenda

There is some excellent work being done to improve farm animal care.

The challenge is to communicate that information to where it's needed, to the farmers and veterinarians who work directly with the animals, right through to the consumer who is interested in knowing the facts on how animals are raised.

In agriculture, animal welfare issues are seldom on the agenda until there is a problem. This project aims to change that with a team approach. The four provincial

farm animal councils and the new national one are working together, with OFAC taking the lead as initiator of the project.

The *Putting Farm Animal Welfare on the Agenda* project will take existing efforts and expand them to a larger reach with more resources across the country.

Some of AFAC's projects will be expanded, including *4-H Livestock Handling for Youth*, *Livestock Welfare INSIGHTS* and www.livestockwelfare.com.



Best Food Nation

In the US, food and farm industries are striking back with a website, BestFoodNation.com, that counters the claims made in the new book, *Chew on This*. This anti-ag book targets preteens and is written by the same author of the *Fast Food Nation* — now a movie!

Alberta Farm Animal Care
 Cambrian PO Box 75028
 Calgary, Alberta T2K 6J8
 403.932.8050
info@afac.ab.ca
afac.ab.ca